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VII.—TWO MODERN GERMAN ETYMOLOGIES.¹

1. *Schnörkel*.

Schnörkel in Modern German designates a twisted ornament, a 'scroll' or 'flourish.' In some of the earlier dictionaries, e. g. in Steinbach's *Vollständiges Deutsches Wörter-Buch* (Breslau, 1734) and in Frisch's *Teutsch-Lateinisches Wörter-Buch* (Berlin, 1741),² the word occurs as *Schnerkel*, and this, no doubt, is the more original form; the change of *e* into *ö* being due to the influence of the neighboring *sch*, as in *löschen*, *Schöpfe*, *schöpfen*, *Schöpfer*, *schröpfen*, *schwören*, which originated from Middle High German *leschen*, *scheffe*, *schepfen*, *schepfere*, *schrepfen*, *swern*.³ It is well known that in such cases the vowels *ö* and *e* are found interchangeably from a time earlier than the beginning of the sixteenth century. E. g. Luther in his later works clings to the *e* (in spelling *schepffen*, *schweren*, etc.), while in his earlier writings the *ö* is found at least in a few cases. On the whole the vowel *ö* is gaining ground; but in

¹A sketch of this paper was read at a Joint Meeting of the American Philological Societies in Philadelphia on December 28th, 1894.

²Cf. Kluge's *Etymolog. Wörterb. d. deutschen Sprache*⁵ (Strassburg, 1894), s. v. *Schnörkel*.

³Cf. Weigand's *Deutsches Wörterbuch*⁴, II (Giessen, 1882), s. v. *Schnörkel*.

some instances the uncertainty between *e* and *ö* is not settled before the end of the eighteenth century.¹ It is in accordance with these facts that, although *Schnerkel* is still used in the first half of the eighteenth century, yet the word is spelled *Schnörckel*, e. g. in Kramer's *Wort-Buch in Teutsch-Italiänischer Sprach* (Nürnberg, 1678).²

In addition to *Schnerkel* and *Schnörkel* in the first half of the sixteenth century the form *Schnirckel* is found.³ Its relation to *Schnerkel* may either be compared with that of *Kringel* to *Krengel*, or we may assume that the pronunciation or the spelling of *Schnerkel* was influenced by a word of similar sound and similar meaning, viz., *Zirkel*.

As regards the etymology of *Schnörkel*, Weigand in his Dictionary (*l. c.*) proposed to derive it from the Old High German verb *snerhan* 'to tie, sling.' The same etymology is, although hesitatingly, advocated by Kluge (*l. c.*), whose words are: "*wohl zu ahd. snarha, snaraha F. Schlinge?*" This etymology, however, is in open conflict with Grimm's law, since the guttural in *snerhan* is Germanic *h*, shifted from Pregermanic *k*,³ while the guttural in *Schnörkel* clearly represents Germanic *k*, shifted from Pregermanic *g*. Weigand was misled apparently by the form *Schnörchel*, given besides *Schnörckel* in Kramer's dictionary.⁴ Yet it is to be noted that Kramer's dictionary was printed in Nürnberg, and that in Southern German dialects Germanic *k* is shifted to *ch*. The form *Schnörchel* then, far from supporting Weigand's opinion, rather serves to confirm the view that the *k* of *Schnörkel* is regular.

Schnörkel or *Schnerkel* is, in my opinion, identical with the MHG. noun *schrenkel*, which occurs in the younger Titarel

¹See K. v. Bahder, *Grundlagen des nhd. Lautsystems* (Strassburg, 1890), p. 163-179, and Wilmanns, *Deutsche Grammatik*, I (Strassburg, 1893), p. 211 *seq.*

²See Weigand, *l. c.*, and Schmeller, *Bairisches Wörterbuch*², II, p. 582.

³Compare Old Norse *snara*, f. 'sling,' from **snarha*, and Fick, *Vergl. Wörterb.*³, III, p. 350.

⁴See above, note 2.

v. 1212: *senkel, mit fremden stricken geflochten in manige schrenkel*. Lexer, who, in his Middle High German Dictionary quotes the word from this passage, records its meaning as ‘*Verschränkung, Schleife, Knoten,*’ i. e., ‘interlacement, loop, knot.’¹

If we are correct in identifying these two words—and it is easily seen that their meaning is identical—Mod. Germ. *Schnörkel* is derived from the MHG. verb *schrenken*, which in Modern German survives in the compounds *beschränken, einschränken, verschränken*. As *schrenken* in MHG. means ‘to cross, twist, entwine,’ we are furnished by this verb with exactly the notion from which *Schnörkel* is most naturally derived. We may add that MHG. *schrenken* goes back to the Old High German weak verb *screncen*² (or in the Alemannian dialect *screnchen*),³ preter. *serancta*. Closely related to this verb are several OHG. nouns in which the notion of deviating or deceiving appears, e. g. *seranc* m. ‘fraud;’ *hintirserenchî* f. ‘tergiversation;’ *hinter-srenchich* ‘deceitful.’² Here belong also MHG. and Mod. Germ. *schrank* m. and *schranke* f. OHG. *screncen* is on the other hand identical with AgS. *screnean* ‘to cause to stumble,’ and probably also connected with O. Norse *skrök* n. ‘lie.’ In combining these words we arrive at a Primitive Germanic basis *seranc*, which apparently meant ‘crooked’ or ‘athwart.’

The above etymology implies that in the period of transition from Middle High German to Modern German the consonants *n* and *r* changed places in the word *schrenkel*. It is well known that similar transpositions of sounds are frequently met with

¹This word *schrenkel* is also found in Middle Low German. It is quoted in Schiller-Lübbers’s *Mittelniederd. Wörterb.*, s. v. *schrenkel* from an Oldenburg charter from 1575, in which it says: *ein sulueren gordel, noch 11 sulueren schrenkel*. In Lübbers-Walther’s *Mittelniederd. Handwörterbuch* it is interpreted “*ein Geschmeide: Spange?*” It seems to mean in the above passage the buckle (‘*Schnalle*’) of a belt: a meaning whose connection with that of the Middle High German word is obvious.

²See Graff, *Althochd. Sprachschatz*, vol. VI, p. 582 seq.

³The *ch* of *screnchen* is of the same nature as that of Kramer’s *Schnörchel*, mentioned above p. 296.

as well in German¹ as in other languages. Suffice it here to quote the following, more or less, parallel examples:

1. MHG. (dial.) *dornstac*² = *donnerstac* or *donrestac* (Engl. 'Thursday').

2. Mod. Germ. *bersten*, Engl. *to burst* = MHG. *bresten*.

3. Mod. Germ. *Born*, AgS. *burna* (Engl. *bourne*) = Mod. G. *Bronnen*, *Brunnen*, OHG. *brunno*, Goth. *brunna*.

4. Mod. G. (and Low G.) *Scharn* (m.) = MHG. *schranne*, OHG. *scranna*.

5. Mod. G. *Erle*, OHG. *erila* = OHG. *elira*, Low G. *eller*, AgS. *alor*, Engl. *alder*.

6. Alem. *zickeln*, Engl. *to tickle*, Middle Engl. *tikelen* = AgS. *cytelian*, Mod. G. *kitzeln*.

7. Mod. G. *Essig*, OHG. *ezzih* from **atecum* = Lat. *acetum*.

8. Mod. G. *Nuss*, O. Norse *hnut-*, AgS. *hnutu*, 'nut,' from Pregermanic **knud-* = Latin *nuc-* from original **dnuk-*.³

2. *schmarotzen*, *Schmarotzer*.

The verb *schmarotzen* 'to sponge on a person' and the noun *Schmarotzer* 'a parasite' have been traced back to the fifteenth century. Yet at that time and in the sixteenth century we meet with slight differences in their form—and for some time also in their meaning—as compared with the present usage. In the *Vocabularius Theutonicus*, a German-Latin vocabulary, printed at Nürnberg in 1492, the two words are given as '*smorotzen*, mendicare,' and '*smorotzer*, mendicus.'⁴ Geiler von Keisersberg (1445–1510), from whose writings *schmorotzer* is quoted in Scherz-Oberlin's *Glossarium German. medii aevi*,⁴ uses this word in the meaning of 'niggard' ('*Knauser*'). In

¹ See, e. g., Janssen's *Index to Kluge's Etymol. Dictionary* (Strassburg, 1890), p. 256, s. v. *Metathesis*, and Wilmanns, *D. Gramm.*, I, p. 143 seq.

² Weinhold, *Mittelhochd. Gramm.*, § 146.

³ See H. Pedersen in Kuhn's *Zeitschr.*, vol. 32, p. 251.

⁴ See Lexer, *Mittelhochd. Handwörterbuch*, s. v. *smorotzen* and *smorotzer*.

the early sixteenth century both words occur in the *Zimmerische Chronik*¹ in the following passages:

Vol. III, p. 204: *Aber sie ward gern geladen, gleichwol sie nit welte darfur angesehen sein, und so sie von herr Wilhelm Wernhern, wann es essens zeit, under ir thur standt, darumb angeredt, ob sie nit bei ime welt essen und schmorotzen, verschmur [read: verschwur] sie das morgenmal, aber gleich darnach legt sie die hendt zusammen, sprechend 'Ach! ach!' so ward sie dann geladen.*

Vol. IV, p. 63: *Wol einher ins teufels namen, du schmorotzer! So du daheimen nichts hast zu fressen, kumpst und wilt mein herren unruhe machen und das sein abnutzen!*

Both *schmorotzen* and *schmorotzer* are used here in the same meaning which attaches to them (or rather to their equivalents *schmarotzen* and *Schmarotzer*) in Modern German. Further testimony for this usage may be found in Frisius' *Dictionarium Latino-Germanicum*, in which we read:²

Parafitus: *Tällerschläcker | Schmorotzer | Schmeichler vñ defz bauchs willē | Liebkoser | Der gern mulefe macht ob eines anderē tisch | Der redt vñ thūt | vñ eim in allē dingē recht gibt | allein dz er mulauf mache vñ zefräßfen habe.*

Parafitor: *Eim in allen dingen willfaren vnd recht geben | oder | Schmeichlen vmb defz bauchs willen | Schmorotzen.*

Parafitafter: *Der dem schmorotzen nachzücht | oder nachuolger deren tällerschläckeren | damit vnd er die kunft auch lerne | vnd güte bißze oder münduolle fräffe.*

It will be noticed from these quotations that in the 15th and the 16th centuries the vowel of the first syllable is invariably *o*; this fact we shall have to take into account in attempting to trace the etymology of these words.

The rather strange sound of the verb *schmarotzen* and the noun *Schmarotzer*, as well as the fact that the accent in both

¹ Ed. by Barack in 4 Voll. = *Bibliothek des Litterar. Vereins*, Bd. 91-94 (Stuttgart, 1868-69).

² I quote from the second edition (Tiguri, 1556), a copy of which (from the collection of the late Professor Sauppe) is found in the library of Bryn Mawr College.

of them—at least at present—rests on the second syllable, may seem to favor the opinion that they are foreign words: an opinion held, *e. g.*, by Weigand in his *Deutsches Wörterbuch*.¹ But we look in vain for a foreign word from which they might have been borrowed. The only word that has been suggested so far, is the noun *morosser* ‘one that seeks to make bargains’ (*Schmuser*), which is said to be found in the language of Upper Italy.² Yet its similarity to the German words, both in regard to form and meaning, is so remote that we are forced to look for a better etymology.

Jacob Grimm in one of the mscr. notes to his *Deutsche Grammatik*³ is inclined to reckon *schmarotzen* among the verbal derivatives in *-(t)zen* like Mod. Germ. *ächzen*, *blitzen* (for **blikzen*), *duetzen*, *grunzen*, *jauchzen*, *ihrzen*, *krächzen*, *lechnzen*, *schluchzen*, *schmatzen* (for *schmakzen*), *schmalzen*, *seufzen*, *siezen*. These verbs, as is well known, are intensive or iterative verbs, whose suffix *-zen* goes back to an earlier form *-ezen-* (also *-izen*), which in OHG. generally appears as *-azen* (and *-ezen* or *-izen*), and in Gothic as *-atjan* (Goth. *lauhatjan* ‘to lighten’). *E. g.*:

MHG. *achzen*, *blinzen*, *duzen*, *irzen*; *bockezen*, *grogezen*, *heschezen*, *kachezen*, *roffezen*, *ruckezen*; *himelizen*, *smackizen*.⁴

OHG. *anazen* ‘to incite, stimulate,’ *heilazen* or *heilezen* ‘to greet,’ *naffezen* ‘to nap, fall asleep,’ *ar-hroffazen* or *ir-roffezen* ‘to belch out,’ *chahazen* ‘to laugh,’ *leidazen* or *leidezen* ‘to detest,’ *lihhezen* or *lihizen* ‘to feign,’ *troffezen* ‘to drop,’ and many others.⁵

Of special interest for our purpose are two cases in which in OHG. the vowel of the derivative syllable has been changed into *o*, viz., *ar-rofozen* (identical with the verb

¹ Vol. II (4th ed., Giessen, 1882), s. v. *schmarotzen*.

² See Kluge's *Etymol. Wörterb.*³, s. v. *schmarotzen*.

³ In the new edition, by W. Scherer, of Vol. II (Berlin, 1878), p. 209.

⁴ Cf. Weinhold, *Mittelhochd. Gramm.*, § 238.

⁵ See Grimm, *Dt. Gr.*, II², p. 217 seq. and 995 seq.; Weinhold, *Alemannische Gramm.*, § 250, and *Bairische Gramm.*, § 208.

ar-hroffazen or *ir-roffezen*, quoted above),¹ and *uorphozen* 'to toss about.'² It is noteworthy that both of these verbs contain the vowel *o* also in the radical syllable; in all probability then the vowel of the suffix has been assimilated to that of the stem.

But is it permitted to compare the *o* of Early Modern Germ. *schmorotzen* with that of OHG. *ar-rofozen* and *uorphozen*, while the *-a-* or *-e-* of OHG. *-a-zen* or *-e-zen* has otherwise been syncopated in Modern German, and in many instances even in Middle High German?

It may be stated, in answer to this objection, that *-a-* and *-e-* are kept to this day in Southern German dialects. The Bavarian dialect has generally *-e-zen*, *e. g.*, in *ach-ezen*, *blink-ezen*, *dû-ezen*, *gluck-ezen*, *juch-ezen*, *naff-ezen*, *pfuch-ezen*, *schnupf-ezen*, *tropf-ezen*; and in Austrian dialects *-a-zen* is frequently found, *e. g.*, in *ach-azen* (Mod. G. *ächzen*), *him-mel-azen* (MHG. *himel-izen*), *juch-azen* (Mod. G. *jauchzen*), *lach-azen* (Mod. G. *lechzen*), *nappf-azen* (OHG. *naffezen*).³

We find, moreover, in New High German dialects, in addition to the forms in *-ezen* and *-azen* just mentioned, several verbs in *-otzen*, *viz.*, Early NHG. *glockotzen* 'to belch' (cf. Bavar. *gluckezen*, Mod. Germ. *glucksen* 'to cluck,' and *kluchzen*, *klucksen* 'to hiccup'); Swabian *ragotzen* 'to wrestle,' and Silesian *hollotzen* 'to shout.'⁴

It is easily seen that the verb *smorotzen* (*schmorotzen*, later on *schmarotzen*) agrees in every respect with OHG. *ar-rofozen*, *uorphozen*, or Modern *glockotzen*, *hollotzen*. We shall have to identify its ending *-otzen* with the old suffix *-azen*, and to explain the *-o-* of this ending from assimilation to the *o* of the radical syllable *smor-*.

¹ *ih arrofozu giborganu* 'eructabo abscondita,' Tat. 74, 3.

² *thaz skef in mittemo sêwue uuas givvuorphozit mit then undon* 'navis autem in medio mari iactabatur fluctibus,' Tat. 81, 1.

³ See Schmeller, *Bair. Wörterb.*; Grimm, *Dt. Gr.*, l. c., and Weinhold, *Bair. Gr.*, l. c.

⁴ See Kluge, *Etym. Wtb.*, l. c.

There remains the question, how to explain the radical syllable *smor-*. In accordance with the usual formation of the derivatives in *-ezen* we might expect to find in MHG. a verb **smor(r)en*, and if such a verb existed, in a meaning related to *smorotzen*, the task of the etymologist would be easy enough. There is, indeed, in MHG. a verb *ver-smorren*; but its notion is 'to shrink, to shrivel,' and it seems impossible to connect it with '*schmarotzen*.' Yet there exists in MHG. another verb which resembles the supposed **smorren* closely in its form and whose meaning is identical with that of *smorotzen*, viz., *smollen*.¹ It occurs in the latter meaning twice in Hugo von Trimberg's *Renner*,² viz.:

v. 5286: *mange liute sint doch só swinde,
daz si irem teglichen gesinde
des brótes etswenne nicht geben wollen,
des siht man ofte von hunger smollen.*

And v. 5306: *swer aber des guotes hát envollen,
und doh niht mac vermáiden smollen,
swenne er vor im ezzen siht,
der hát mit grözer untugent phliht.*

The explanation of *smorotzen* from this verb *smollen* is supported by the following reasons:

(1). As regards the form, the change of *l* with *r* is found in MHG. in other words belonging to the same group with *smollen*: *smollen* itself, as is generally agreed upon, is derived from MHG. *smielen* 'to smile.' But in addition to *smielen* we find the form *smieren*; and the alternation of *l* with *r* extends both to the noun *der smiel* or *der smier*, and to the verbal com-

¹ Schmeller, *Bair. Wörterb.*, II, p. 549; Müller-Zarncke, *Mittelhochd. Wörterb.*, II, 2, p. 433 b.

² Hugo von Trimberg wrote his didactic poem *Der Renner* in Bamberg at the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th century. The exact date at which the poem was finished is as little known as the year in which the poet died; yet it appears that the poem was not begun before 1296, and finished later than 1313. See E. J. Wölfel in the *Zeitschr. f. dt. Altert.*, vol. 18 (1884), pp. 145-162.

pounds *er-smielen* or *er-smieren* and *ge-smielen* or *ge-smieren*.¹ The *r* in *smorotzen* may accordingly be explained in two different ways. Either there existed in addition to *smollen* a dialectic verb **smorren*, formed from *smieren* as *smollen* from *smielen*; the verb *smorotzen* would in this case have to be regarded as a derivation of this lost simplex **smorren*. Or we may assume that *smorotzen* is based upon an earlier form **smolotzen*, derived from *smollen*, and that **smolotzen* survived only in its younger parallel form *smorotzen*, as MHG. *smielen*, *smieren* later on remained only in the form *schmieren*. Whichever explanation we prefer; we may take it for granted that the coexistence in MHG. of *smielen* and *smieren* justifies that of its derivatives *smollen* and *smorotzen*.

(2). As regards the meaning, MHG. *smollen* is the same verb as Mod. Germ. *schmollen* 'to pout,' and occurs in the latter meaning ('*aus Unwillen schweigen*' or, as I should prefer for the passage in the *Renner*, quoted below: '*den Mund hängen lassen, mürrisch sehen*') in the very poem which furnished us with MHG. *smollen* in the meaning of '*schmarotzen*.'² Strange as this fact may at the first glance appear, it is amply explained if we consider the original meaning of *smollen* and its relation to that of *smielen*, *smieren*. The latter verb means 'to smile,' and *smollen* is in this signification ('*subridere*') recorded in Diefenbach's *Glossar. Lat.-Germ. mediae et infimae latinitatis*, 516^b.³ But this notion developed into that of 'to screw up the mouth, to make a wry face' ('*den Mund hängen lassen, sauer sehen*'),⁴ which later on led to that of Mod. Germ. *schmollen* 'to pout.' If in the two passages of the *Renner*, quoted above p. 302, *smollen* has assumed the

¹ See Müller-Zarncke's and Lexer's MHG. dictionaries. The form *smieren* is kept in Bavar. *schmieren* 'to smile;' Schmeller, *Bair. Wörterb.*², II, p. 556.

² *Renner*, v. 14117: *smollen unde swigen*.

³ Cf. Lexer, *Mittelhochd. Handwörterb.*, s. v. *smollen*.

⁴ This change may be brought under the general head of deterioration of meaning, examples of which from Mod. German are given in Janssen's *Index* to Kluge's *Etymol. Dict.*, p. 269, s. v. '*Verschlechterung der Bedeutung*.'

sense of '*schmarotzen, gieren*' ('to sponge upon a person, to long for something'), this notion, no doubt, is connected with the preceding one, in that it refers par excellence to the act of making a wry face at the sight of others eating. We may even doubt whether we are allowed to translate with Schmeller—whose translation has been generally accepted¹—in those two passages *smollen* by '*schmarotzen, gieren*,' and whether the verb does not simply mean '*den Mund hängen lassen*.' But whatever interpretation we adopt for *smollen* in the passages of the *Renner*, the difference of opinion will in no way affect their value for the explanation of the word *schmarotzen*. For Hugo von Trimberg's usage shows plainly that there was at his time a tendency towards applying the word *smollen* especially to the act of assuming an air of need or of dissatisfaction in order to arouse sympathy in others. Now if we compare the earliest extant examples of *smorotzen*, we easily discover that their meaning, while it is not exactly identical with the later usage of the word (*i. e.*, 'to sponge upon, to act the parasite'), corresponds exactly with Trimberg's usage of the verb *smollen*. The interpretation in the '*Vocabularius Theutonicus*' of *smorotzer* by '*mendicus*' and of *smorotzen* by '*mendicare*' is the counterpart of *Renner*, 5286: *des siht man ofte von hunger smollen*; and the interpretation, referred to in Scherz' *Glossarium* of *schmorotzer* by '*Knauser*' ('niggard'), is explained by *Renner*, 5306: *wer aber des guotes hât envollen, und doh niht mac vermâden smollen, etc.* In brief, the peculiarities in the early usage of *smorotzen* find a parallel in the different shades of meaning of MHG. *smollen*.

According to the general rule for the position of the accent in German, and in accordance with the Bavarian and Austrian derivatives in *-ezen* and *-azen* (like *a'chezen*, *a'chazen*), the verb *schmorotzen* bore originally the accent on the first syllable. Its shifting from the first to the second syllable has a parallel in

¹ With the only exception, to my knowledge, of Schade, who in his *Altd. Wörterb.*², s. v. *smollen* omits the '*schmarotzen*' and gives '*gieren*' with a question mark.

words like *Forélle* (= MHG. *fórhele*), *Hollu'nder* (= MHG. *ho'lunder*), *Schlaráffe* (= MHG. *slü'r-affe*), and *lebe'ndig* (= MHG. *le'bendie*).¹ It is probably due to this change in the accent, that *schmorotzen* and *Schmorotzer* were replaced by *schmarotzen* and *Schmarotzer*, since words like *Heimat* (= MHG. *heimöt(e)*), *Monat* (= MHG. *mōnot*, *mānot*), and *Bräutigam* (= MHG. *briutegome*) show that there was in Early Modern German a tendency towards reducing the vowel *o* in unstressed syllables to *a*. Since the *a* is found in *schmarotzen* and *Schmarotzer* in the seventeenth century, this would lead to the conclusion that the shifting of the accent from the first to the second syllable took place in or before the sixteenth century; an opinion which agrees well with what we know about the date of the similar shifting in *lebe'ndig* (earlier *le'bendig*).

The position of the accent on the middle syllable is also presupposed by the collateral forms *schmarutzen* and *Schmarutzer*, which, although at first dialectic, have been admitted to the language of our classics.² Their *u* instead of *o*, as I take it, is due to the tendency of Midland German dialects to change *o* in accented syllables to *u*, e. g., in *huffenunge* (*Hoffnung*), *hulz* (*Holz*), *muchte* (*mochte*), *uffen* (*offen*), *ufte* (*oft*), *vrust* (*Frost*), *zurn* (*Zorn*).³

HERMANN COLLITZ.

¹ See Behaghel in Paul's *Grundriss der German. Philologie*, I, p. 255; Kluge, *Et. Wtb.*, s. v. *lebendig*.

² E. g. Goethe's *Faust*, I, 2054:

*Mit welcher Freude, welchem Nutzen,
Wirst du den Cursum durchschmarutzen!*

³ See the quotations for these and other examples in Weinhold's *Mittelhochd. Gramm.*, § 51.